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Happy New Year!

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SOUNDING BOARD

JAN.-FEB. 1957

THE BOOK STALL E. CLAIR

CYLINDER RECORDS: DUANE D. DEAKINS, MD., 1057 Paloma, Stockton, Calif., 18 pp ($1.00)

"A description of the numbering systems, physical appearance, and other aspects of cylinder records made by the major American companies, with brief remarks about the earliest American companies and the Foreign record manufactures." Thus does Dr. Deakins explain the content of his paper. Further, in a letter to me, he writes: "This is not to be construed as the 'last word' on this subject. Actually it is probaply the first such article that has been written. And because it is there are bound to be errors of omission and commission. It is hoped that when you spot such errors you will advise me about them."

The collecting of cylinders, heretofore a somewhat neglected phase of the general interest in records, has grown apace. That neglect is difficult to understand, in as much as the history of the first decade of the recording industry is also, and entirely, the history of the development of the cylinder and the cylinder-playing phonograph. A fair number of names famous in the entertainment world of the nineties and earlier exist only on cylinders and many historically important discs that have been issued lately were possible only because some few collectors had the foresight to value and preserve the rare 'rollers' from which they were dubbed. It is interesting to speculate upon the 12,000 titles that Pathe carried in their 1904 catalog.

Moreover cylinders were manufactured for a longer time than most people -- among them many collectors -- realize. Edison, with characteristic tenacity went right on making them, concurrently with the Diamond Discs, until the unfortunate and disastrous fire of 1929 eased him out of business altogether. Dr. Deakins tells us that the last commercial cylinder made was an organ arrangement of I LOVE YOU on Blue Amberol #5719 in that year.

'Cylinder Records', is, as far as I know, the first comprehensive survey of the subject. Beginning with the North American Phonograph Co., it discusses the physical aspects of the cylinder-product, the numbering systems and other pertinant data of the major U.S. recording companies in as much detail as present information makes possible. Covered are National Phonograph Co. (Edison), the Columbia Phonograph Co., the Indestructable Record Co., U.S. Phono. Co., and the Lambert Phono. Co. Some smaller companies are mentioned and foreign cylinder makers are commented upon briefly.

Nobody who has not attempted to compile at least a discography can appreciate the difficulty of the task that Dr. Deakins set for himself. Or the amount of work compacted into the small sheaf of pages that are the result of his labor. The paper work, the long poring over catalogs and magazines, the enormous correspondence implicit in such a project as this represent an enormous investment of time --- and some money. Many of the pre-1900 catalogs and supplements that he has had to consult are somewhat less common than dinosaur bones. I happen to know --- and this may surprise the good Doctor --- that he posted a forfeit of $25.00 against the safe return of one of them.

Dr. Deakins brochure, excellent and informative as it is in every respect, cannot but give a fillip to the collecting of cylinders. But - and this is a far more important - it is the first detailed contribution on a particular phase of the initial chapter of phonographic history.

I am informed that the first printing of 'Cylinder Records' is exhausted. But if sufficient interest is shown there will certainly be another. The address is 1057 Paloma, Stockton, California, the price $1.00.

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Recent findings of many rare cylinders often lead me to speculate as to the wealth of recorded material that must still exist somewhere. We've all read of the Patti cylinders found in the 40's, the cylinders of Florence Nightingale, Kenneth Landfrey (bugler of the Crimean War), P. T. Barnum, and so forth.

The greatest stimulant to my imagination though, was a news article I ran across some time back telling of cylinders that had been recorded by Edison's European colleague, Col. George Edward Gouraud. This article dated April 28, 1894 went on to say that a gathering of close friends and relatives along with Edison and Gouraud had assembled to hear some recently recorded items by some of the leading personalities of the world. Abridgedly, the article went on to say that the first voice placed on the phonograph was that of the late Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster. Clearly, yet softly, came the words of the Roman Church: "A hearty greeting to the inventor of the most wonderful instrument of modern science. Henry Edward, Cardinal-Archbishop....Easter Day, 1891. "After the cardinal came a few royalites, beginning with his majesty of Greece. Next the King, Queen, and Crown Prince of Italy. Then came a group of military voices, beginning with the Duke of Cambridge and Gen. Lord Wolseley. They were mainly Christmas greetings and congratulations to Edison, spoken at a dinner specially given to Col. Gourard to meet the royal Commander-in-Chief of the British army. Next came the Prince and Princess of Wales, spoken at Sandringham when Col, Gouraud was one of a house party which included the Empress Frederick and her daughters and the late Duke of Clarence.

England's greatest and grandest old man came next, and the face of Edison lit up with pleasure: "I cheerfully comply," said he, "with the request you have done me the honor to make, but I regret to say that I can only send you the remnant of an organ that has been overstrained. As much of my voice as is left I gladly give you. Wonders upon wonders are opening up before us. Your great country is leading the way in the great work of invention, and to you, as one of its greatest celebrities, I send my hearty good wishes for all that pertains to the well-being of mankind. To Edison---William Ewart Gladstone." Two dead but never-to-be-forgotten minstrels followed, Tennyson and Browning. The dead laureate began by exclaiming that he never could remember a line of his own poems, so he begged permission to read something into the phonograph. The something was his "Ode to Wellington" dated from "Aldworth" and signed"Alfred Tennyson" Browning failed in memory like his brother poet, but he began by trying to remember. His recitation was his poem, "How they carried the news from Ghent to Aix,"

Other voices heard were the Persian poet Burghast, the actress Mrs. Bancroft, the French celebrity Ernest Georges Boulanger, the Duchess d'Uzes (the wealthy and high-born French woman who is supposed to have found the money for the Boulanger boom), Lord Armstrong, the gun maker, and Lord Kelvin.

The voices of a number of minor lights in the world of everything concluded the seance, and before farewells were given it was agreed to by Mr Edison and Col.Gouraud that their libraries of voices should be amalgamated and left as a hereditary trust to the eldest representatives of the Edison-Gouraud families. Fauvel Gouraud, a young intending lawyer, about to graduate from Yale,was told that he could draw up the necessary papers

Does this not excite your curiosity? It did mine. Anyone having any information as to the whereabouts of these items would do well to bring it to the fore so that rerecordings could be made to preserve these voices for all times and peoples to follow.

Many recording artists have enjoyed vast popularity, but it's doubtful that any American performer has ever so completely dwarfed his competitors as did the Australian comedian, Billy Williams, in England over a seven-year period that began about 1908 and continued until his death in the spring of 1915.

Known throughout most of his professional career as "The Man in the Velvet Suit", Williams' real name appears to have been William Banks. He was born in Melbourne in 1877 and came from a family whose members showed a strong liking for sports. His brothers, Rowley and Dick Banks, became the champion golfers of the Antipodes, and Billy Williams himself was also good at the game. As a youngster he likewise had a try at being a jockey.

After some theatrical experience, barnstorming with stock companies around the "back bush" areas of Australia, the young man came to England in the late 1890's. By 1900 he was assistant manager of the Marylebone music hall, and it was there that he made his first public appearance in the British Isles.He was so adept at impersonations and singing parodies on the popular songs of the day that the manager of the Marylebone told an Edison recording official he believed Billy would be a "natural" as a singer for cylinders.

Late in 1906 or early in 1907, Williams was signed at the "munificent salary of two pounds, ten shillings ($12.50, at the then prevailing rate of exchange) to make Edison records. His first cylinder, JOHN, JOHN, GO AND PUT YOUR TROUSERS ON, was a historic smash hit. At this late date it's hard to understand why it caused a sensation. I recently heard it for the first time and was bitterly disappointed. The comedy, which includes an impersonation of Harry Lauder singing STOP YOUR TICKLING, JOCK seems weak all the way through.But tastes change, and 50 years or so ago that cylinder became the rage throughout the British Empire and brought Williams offers of more music hall engagements than he could fill. Soon he was appearing in four to six houses a night--singing a few minutes in each, then driving on to another.

At first, the genial, stockily-built young man of medium height thought he was under exclusive contract to Edison and bitterly bewailed his lot at selling his services for such a ridiculously low figure. The Edison business manager took the attitude that the records were the cause of Williams' fame and fortune in the music halls and stubbornly refused to alter the three-year contract. But another Edison man quietly pointed out to Williams that he was exclusive to Edison only for cylinders and was at liberty to sing for as many disc companies as he liked. There were something like two dozen manufacturers of discs operating in Great Britain at that time, and Williams soon was singing for just about all of them at high fees. When his Edison contract expired he took an almost fiendish glee in making his parsimonious "persecutor" pay through the nose.

From the time he became established as a stage celebrity and an even greater favorite among recording artists, Billy Williams' popularity never sagged. Even today most listeners feel it impossible to resist the powerful impact of his fresh, buoyant personality, even though some find his constant chuckle irritating---just as they do Harry Lauder's. The chuckling appears to have been expected of comedians in those days.

Williams differed from American comedians in that he didn't restrict himself to singing the comic songs turned out by the regular writers. Instead, after recording a few parodies, he eschewed regulation popular songs altogether and stuck to material specially written for him by a number of the foremost English words and music men. Sometimes they wrote in collaboration with Williams himself. Many of the titles, merely read aloud, are good for a typical Williamsian chuckle: WHEN FATHER PAPERED

OUR FOLK HERITAGE ON RECORDS BILL STAMM

As we all know, the wealth of American song is great indeed. Through hundreds of years, wars, new frontiers, regional customs and the industrial or urban growth, our common songbag is a huge challenge to piece together and record for the future historians. Several record companies and one in particular, Folkways, are doing this with taste and purpose. Here is a cross section of long playing records that illustrates our singing heritage. The westward drive of settlers and the songs they invented, passed along and sang around campfires can be found in Folkways volumes 1 and 2 of FRONTIER BALLADS sung by Pete Seeger with his five string banjo. The cowboys of the Southwest were a singing lot while the cattle industry grew up and swallowed them. To retain individualism, the songs came thick and fast about the element of nature they faced, the long hours, small pay and loneliness. Many of these songs can be found in Folkways COWBOY BALLADS by Cisco Houston, TEXAS FOLK SONGS by Herman Nye, and Riverside's CHISHOLM TRAIL album by Merrit Jarrick. The hard traveling and saga of the migratory workers, and the hobo movement of the early twentieth century are told and resung in such albums as THE GREAT AMERICAN BUM by John Greenway (Riverside); 900 MILES AND OTHER RAILROAD BALLADS by Cisco Houston (Folkways); BOUND FOR GLORY Woodie Guthrie (Folkways) and TRAVELIN by Cisco Houston (also Folkways). These railway and hobo songs can be both humorous and sad and are delivered with simplicity and meaning.

Negro spirituals work songs and blues can be found authentically done on Folkways LP's, GET ON BOARD by Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, BLUES BY BROWNIE McGHEE, TAKE THIS HAMMER and ROCK ISLAND LINE by the late and great Huddie Leadbelly and his twelve string guitar. Of course, it would be foolish to go on and on listing the great amount of material available for us today on records, tracing the sources of our culture but a few catagories would be Square dances, songs of sailormen and lumbermen, southern regional ballads, songs of the Revolutionary and Civil wars, industrial union songs, and much more. The catalogs of Folkways, Stinson, Riverside, Electra, and a few other companies show Americana on records, compiled with care and original feeling intact. A closer examination of their output would add a great deal of listening pleasure to our collections.

(Billy Williams continued)

THE PARLOR, WHERE DOES DADDY GO WHEN HE GOES OUT, BLAME IT ON POOR OLD FATHER, GIVING A DONKEY A STRAWBERRY---there are hundreds of them. And Williams made thousands of records, singing for any firm that would pay his price. The demand for his services was so keen that Columbia paid him a double fee to sing his new numbers ten days earlier for it than for any other company. English phonograph publications of the 1908-15 period are full of hysterical advertising of the "latest and greatest" in Billy Williams records.

I haven't been able to ascertain positively the date of Williams' death nor its cause, but it occurred at Shoreham, England, probably in March, 1915. A veteran Edison official in this country tells me he believes it resulted from a heart attack caused by overwork. For some reason, such publications as the TALKING MACHINE NEWS referred only briefly to his death and gave no details.

Billy Williams (who occasionally got away with using profanity on his records!) was never the huge favorite in the States that he was throughout the British Empire; but several companies Edison, Pathe and Columbia among them---imported generous samplings of his repertoire, and they have given pleasure to thousands of admirers of clever comedy. There seems little reason to believe that the curly-haired "Man in the Velvet Suit" will ever be entirely Forgotten.

If records and record collecting lie in a deadly serious ivory tower, better not bother with this department -- which is often frivolous, is often frankly redolent of the unimportant, and is more often concerned with the foul balls than the loudly-cheered homers.

For instance, I have been uncertain for a long time as to whether I really heard the foghorn in Galli-Curci's TWILIGHT Victor 64807, (or 632) or whether the walls of the studio came up with an unusual echo. But Mrs. Artsay says it's a foghorn's sound from the bay, and just because it happens to blend in with the accompaniment is no reason it shouldn't get credit for getting into the act. While it will probably be unnoticed by a casual listener, you can plainly catch it by paying close attention when the needle gets about half an inch into the grooves.

Both Ed Lotz and Angus Joss have suggested that I should mention Victor Black Seal 12 inch 35229. When you put the needle on the outside groove in the normal manner it may decide to favor you with any one of four selections -- BECAUSE, as a tenor solo, or a little ragtime by orchestra, or I WANT TO SING IN OPERA - possibly by Bob Roberts - or a nice bass solo. The title is simply THE CONUNDRUM.

A most interesting and unusual disc has come to my files lately. Single-sides, and 10 inch, it bears an IMPERIAL RECORD label, black, with lettering and a crown in gold. The legend is just this: In French - Choir St. Ambrose Church, Paris - Ave Maria, 15th Century. With Organ Accompaniment, French Horn and Violin Obligato. 9037. Made for us in Paris. The number is also stamped below the label, and a smaller number is above - 1974D; both these are reversed. The music itself is of smooth beauty, and in Latin, not French. There is a soloist, whose voice soars effortlessly above the chorus. I would guess this disc to be of the 1905-10 period, and since my understanding is that no woman's voices were used in such choirs, it would be expected that a boy soprano would be singing this lovely ancient number. However, the voice sounds strangely mature for a boy, and some who have heard this disc with me have considered it possible that it is a soprano after the order of Moreschi* I would hesitate to state this as a probability in the twentieth century, but it would appear to be a possibility. If any of my readers can furnish any information, or would wish to venture opinions, about this disc it would be welcome indeed. The record is of a texture to remind me of the old Leeds platters, and has only moderate surface noise.There is a sticker on the back, which states the price at a dollar, and gives no address for the firm, Regardless of identity or performers or firm, it is an interesting recording of a piece of old church music, made in an ancient Parisian sanctuary.

Of an entirely different category is a cylinder which has come to my notice recently, and of which I hastened to obtain a copy on tape for further study. Records of "Imitations" turn up quite seldom, and to my notion merit close attention - especially if the imitated voices are entirely unavailable because unrecorded. Anyway, this roller is a Columbia, made about the turn of the century - personally, I judge it to be about '97 or '98 - and is announced: "A series of imitations, made for the Columbia Phonograph Company of New York and London." The first is JOSEPH JEFFERSON, THE MEETING WITH MEENIE. I compared it with the authentic Jefferson, and the imitator does very good work indeed. But the second and third are of actors whose voices, so far as I know, or any of my friends know, were never waxed. After Jefferson follows JOHN T. RAYMOND, AS COLONEL MULBERRY SELLERS. Raymond was a popular actor whose greatest triumph was the part of Mark Twain's character, Sellers. He was born in 1836, and his correct name was John O'Brien. At the age of 18 he made his first appearance on the stage in Syracuse, N.Y., and immediately forsook his ordinary mercantile pursuits and became an actor. He played Trenchard in "Our American Cousin" with Sothern in England.. He was competent in many

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GUISEPPE ANSELMI, Tenor

F 3 Cavalleria R. (Mascagni) Siciliana di Turiddu (O Lola ch'hai de latti)
Werther (Massenet) Stanze di Ossian (Ah, non mi ridestar)
F 5 Don Giovanni (Mozart) Aria di Ottavio (Il mio tesoro)
Don Pasquale (Donizetti) Cant. di Ernesto (Sogno soave)
F 4 Fedora (Giordano) Arioso di Loris (Amor ti vieta)
Manon (Massenet) Sogno di Des Grieux (Chiudo goi occhi)
F 2 Pagliacci (Leoncavallo) Arioso di Canto (Vesta la Giubba)
Mignon(Thomas) Ror. di Gugliemo (Ah, non credevi tu)
F 1 Rigoletto (Verdi) Aria del Duca Pt.II (Parmi veder le lacrime)
Iris (Mascagni) Ser. di Jor (Apri la tua finestra)

MARIA BARRIENTOS, Soprano

F 6 Dinorah (Meyerbeer) Aria di Dinorah Pt.I (Ombra leggiera)
" " " " " Pt.II " "
F 7 Fra Diavolo (Auber) Cav. di Zerlina (Or son sola, alfin respiro)
Rigoletto (Verdi) Aria di Golda (Caro nome)
F 8 Sonnambula (Bellini) Cav. di Amina Pt.I Aria (Come per me sereno)
" " " " " Pt.II Cabaletta (Sovra il sen la man mi posa)

AMEDEO BASSI, Tenor

F 9 Fedora (Giordano) Arioso di Loris (Amor ti victa)
Siberia (Giordano) Scena di Vassilli (T'incontrai per via)

ALESSANDRO BONCI.

F 12 Aida (Verdi) Rom. di Radames (Celesta Aida)
Zaza (Leoncavallo) Rom. di Milio (Mai piu Zaza)
F 16 Don Pasquale (Donizetti) Aria di Ernesto (Cerchero lontana terra)
Pescatori di P. (Bizet) Rom. di Nadir (Mi par d'udir ancora)
F 20 Puritani (Bellini) Cant. di Arturo (A te, o cara)
Fedora (Giordano) Arioso di Loris (Amor ti victa)
F 17 Barbiere di S. (Rossini) Can. d'Almaviva (Se il mio nome)
Vieni amor mio (Leoncavallo) Melodia
F 11 Africana(Meyerbeer) Aria di Vasco (O Paradiso)
Rigoletto (Verdi) At. II Aria (Parmi veder le lacrime)
F 18 Favorita (Donizetti) Rom. di Fernando (Spirito gentil)
Elisir d'Amore (Donizetti) Cav. di Nemorino (Quanto e bella)
F 19 Traviata (Verdi) Aria di Alfredo (De' miei bollenti spiriti)
Manon Lescaut (Puccini) Rom. di Des Grieux (Donna non vidi mai)
F 14 Lucia di L. (Donizetti) Cabaletta di Edgardo (Tu che a Dio spegasti)
Andrea Chenier (Giordano) Improvviso (Un di all'azzurro spazio) I'ali)
F 15 Marta (Flotow) Rom. di Lionello (M'appari)
Werther (Massenet) Stanze di Ossian (Ah, non mi ridestar)
F 10 Rigoletto (Verdi) Ballata del Duca (Questa o quella)
Rigoletto (Verdi) Rec. e Aria del Duca (Ella mi fu rapita)
F 13 Werther (Massenet) Stanze de Ossian (Ah, non mi ridestar)
Ave Maria (Gounod) con acc. di violino orgono e pianoforte

CARLO DANI, Tenor

F 22 Manon (Massenet) Sogno di Des Grieux (Chiudo gli occhi)
Manon (Massenet) Sogno di Des Grieux (Ah dispar, vision)
F 23 Faust (Gounod) Strofe di Mefistofele (Dio del'or)
Faust (Gounod) Ser. di Mefistofele (To che fai Paddormentata)

(Fonotipia Series continued)

F 24 Mefistofele (Boito) Prolog (Ave Signor)
Roberto il D. (Meyerbeer) Scena de evocazione (Suore che riposate)
F 25 Vita Bretone (Mugnone) Canz. di Papa Silverstro (Vivea nel tempo antico)
Gli Ugonotti (Meyerbeer) Corale di Marcello (Signor difesa e scudo)

SALOMEA KRUSCENISKI, Soprano

F 26 Adriana Lecouvreur (Cilea) Rom. di Adriana (Io son l'umile ancella)
Adriana Lecouvreur (Cilea) Aria dei fiori (Poveri fior)

JAN KUBELIK, Violinist

F 30 Danse Hongroise (Liszt) Violino con acc. di pianoforte
Cavatina (Raff) Violino con acc, di pianoforte
F 27 Faust (Gounod) Variaz. sulla ball. di Mefistofele
Reverie (Schumann)
F 29 Scerzo Tarantella (Wieniawski)
Serenade (Drdla)
F 28 Serenata (Drdla)
Vision (Drdla)

ORESTE LUPPI, Bass

F 31 Ernani (Verdi) Cav. di Silva (Infelice e tuo eredevi)
Barbiere di S. (Rossini) Aria di Don Basilio(La calunnia è un venticello
F 32 Messa da Requim (Verdi) Confutatis, Con acc. d'organo
Stabat Mater (Rossini) Pro peccatis, Con acc. d'organo

ANTONIO MAGINI-COLETTI, Baritone

F 33 Carmen (Bizet) Strofe di Toreador (Con voi ber)
Traviata (Verdi) Aria di Germont (Di Provenza il mar)
F 34 La Danza (Rossini) Tarantella (Gia la luna in mezzo al mare)
Dinorah (Meyerbeer) Rom. di Hoel (Sei vendicata assai)
F 36 Rigoletto (Verdi) Aria di Rigoletto Pt. I (Il sol per me non ha piu)
" " " " " Pt.II " " " " " "
F 35 " " Monologo di Rigoletto (Pari siamo)
Lucia di L. (Donizetti) Cav. di Enrico (Cruda, funesta smania)

REGINI PACINI, Soprano
F 40 Barbiere di S. (Rossini) Cav. di Rosina Pt. I (Una voce poco fa)
" " " " " " " Pt.II (Io sono docile)
F 38 Flauto Magico (Mozart) Aria di Regina (Gli angui d'inferno)
" " " " " " (Non paventar)
F 39 Boheme (Puccini) Racconto di Mimi (Si, Mi Chiamano Mimi)
Ave Maria (Gounod) Con acc. di violino
F 37 Traviata (Verdi) Aria di Violetta (Sempre libera degg'io)
Variazioni (Proch) Deh torna mio bene
F 41 Mirella (Gounod) Valzer (Oh d'amor messaggera)
Perla del Brasile (David) Aria del Misoly (Gentile Angel)

ARMIDA PARSI-PETTINELLA, Contralto

F 43 Carmen (Bizet) Seguidilla (La sul bastion Siviglia)
Favorita (Donizetti) Pt.I Aria(O Mio Fernando) Pt.IICaba. (Su Crudeli)
F 44 Trovatore (Verdi) Canzone di Azucena (Stride la vampa)
Mignon (Thomas) Romanza di Mignon (Non conosci il bel suol)
F 42 La Gioconda (Ponchielli) Romanza della Cicca (Voce di donna)
La Favorita (Donizetti) Aria di Leonora

(Fonotipia Series continued)

GIANNINA RUSS, Soprano

F 47 Ave Maria (Gounod) Con acc. di violino e organo
Norma (Bellini) Cav. di Norma (Casta diva)
F 45 Forza del Destino (Verdi) Finale II (La Vergine degli Angeli)
Boheme (Puccini) Racconto di Mimi (Si, mi chiamani Mimi)
F 46 Leggenda Valacca (Braga) Oh quali mi risvegliano , Con acc. di violino
Libro Santo (Pinsuti) La mia povera mamma, Con acc. di violino
(Violino. Alessandra Genesini)

MARIO SAMMARCO, Baritone

F 48 Adriana Lecouvreur (Cilea) Mon. di Michonnet (Ah: stupenda mirabile)
Favorita (Donizetti) Cantabli di Alfonzo (A tanto amor)
F 49 Ballo in maschera (Verdi) Aria di Reanto (Eri tu che macchiavi)
Tannhauser (Wagner) Romanza di Volframo (Oh tu, bell'astro incantator)

RACCARDO STRACCIARI, Baritone

F 51 Aida (Verdi) Sortita d'Amonasro (Quest'assisa ch'io vesto)
Faust (Gounod) Aria di Valentino (Dio Possente, Dio d'amor)
F 50 Lucia di L. (Donizetti) Cav. di Enrico (Cruda, funesta smania)
Tannhauser (Wagner) Lotta dei Bardi (Ed or che tu coll'estro)

FRANCISCO VIGNAS, Tenor
F 53 Profeta (Meyerbeer) Pastorale di Giovanni (Sopra Berta, l'amor mio)
Lohengrin (Wagner) Addio di Lohengrin (Cigno fedel)
F 52 L'Africana (Meyerbeer) Aria di Vasco (O Paradiso)
Aida (Verdi) Romanza di Radames (Celeste Aida)

GIOVANNI ZENATELLO, Tenor

F 55 Pagliacci (Leoncavallo) Cant. di Canio (Un tal gioco credetelo)
Otello (Verdi) Morte d'Otello (Niun mi tema)
F 54 Traviata (Verdi) Aria di Alfredo (De' miei bolenti spiriti)
Traviata (Verdi) Scena della borsa (Questa donna conoscete?)
F 56 Manon Lescaut (Puccini) Romanza di Des Grieux (Donna non vidi mai)
Manon Lescaut (Puccini) Cantab. di Des Grieux (Guardate pazzo son)

DUETS

F 57 Pescatori di P. (Bizet) Atto. Duetto Nadir-Zurga(Del tempio al limitar)
BONCI, MAGINI-COLETTI
Rigoletto (Verdi) Atto. I. Duetto Rigoletto-Spar.(Signor?va,non ho
MAGINI-COLETTI, LUPPI niente)
F 21 Trovatore (Verdi) Atto,IV.Duetto Eleonor a Conte Pt.I (Qual Voce)
" " " " " " " Pt.II(Conte..ne cessi?
BURZIO, MAGINI-COLETTI
F 58 Aida (Verdi) Atto.IV. Duetto Amneris-Radames Pt.II(Misero appien me
FRASCANI ZENATELLO festi)
Favorita (Donizetti) Atto.Coro d'introduzione (Ball'alba foriera)
CORISTI DELLA SCALA

12 Inch Records

ALESSANDRO BONCI,Tenor

F 1000 Boheme (Puccini) Racconto di Rodolfo (Che gelida manina)
Faust (Gounod) Cavatina di Faust (Salve Dimora)

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Sauer made phonograph records at so recent a date that we learn with something of a shock that he made his first tour as a finished artist in 1882. No pianist has had more illustrious forbears. He was first taught by his mother who had been a pupil of Deppe, and he later studied with Nicholas Rubinstein and Liszt.

Well educated, a firm believer in diet and exercise and with great strength of character, he preserved his talent almost unimpaired until the end. He was a real virtuoso of the old school, a romantic player with the authentic 'grand manner', who delighted his audiences for a good half century.

Busoni once said that he could admire only pianists of the earlier school of Liszt, such as Sauer, Reisenaur and D'Albert in his prime. Contemporary critics spoke of the nobility and fire of Sauer's playing, the warmth of expression, beautiful technical equipment, fine poetic insight, great elegance, and his suave polished style. We read also of his spright ly infectious rhythm, mastery of delicate nuance and invariable good tone. Clarity, freshness of delivery, and beautifully finished interpretations seem to have been his strong points.

A photograph of Sauer's hands is included in Breithaupt's 'Die Naturliche Klaviertechnik' showing the long supple fingers of obvious strength and elasticity--perfect tools for a bravura pianist who could always rise to a 'staccato epresto scherzando'.

The evidence of his all too few records amply supports the foregoing collection of critical observations. The acoustic Vox issues are very fine, with a beautifully controlled performance of Chopin's BERCEUSE, a Liszt RHAPSODY NO. 15 of superb sweep and verve and a rendering of the Strauss-Schutzer BLUE DANUBE that is a constant delight.

The Pathe electrical recordings include a valuable performance of the CAMPANELLA -- he was a pupil of Liszt -- and examples of Sauer playing salon pieces of his own composition delightful playing, if poor music.

The Odeon records which followed included a fine version of Chopin's WALTZ A MAJOR OP. 42; and the Liszt GNOMENREIGEN is a gem. It is a great pity that the couplings were mixed.

Some valuable titles were recorded by Columbia when Sauer was in his seventies, the majority being works by Liszt. The pianist was joined in the concerti by Weingartner, another Liszt pupil. In spite of the obvious fact that they were two elderly gentlemen at the time, one cannot dismiss so authentic an interpertation lightly, as has so often been attempted. The attention to detail is great, the conception is broad and leisurely, and one feels that here is an aspect of Liszt too often overlooked in these days of keyboard circus-riding.

The true collector of piano records will want all of Sauer's records, and the recordings of pieces by Liszt have obvious historical value. It may be that such refined and elegant playing is no longer the fashion, and if this is so, one can only deplore the fact.

SAUER DISCOGRAPHY

NOTE: Capitals: C major keys Lower case: c minor keys.

Vox c. 1920

Mendelssohn, SCHERZO (Another Title?)	06249
Chopin, BERCEUSE OP. 57; WALTZ e OP. POST.	06253
Liszt, HUNGARIAN RHAPSODIE NO. 15; Sauer KONCENT POLKA	06254
Beethoven, ADAGIO OP. 13; Chopin, IMPROMTU A OP. 29	06260
Sauer, ECHOS AN WEIN	06268
Strauss-Schulzer, BLUE DANUBE	06273

Pathe 1928

	LA CAMPANELLA
Mendelssohn, SCHERZO (Midsummer Nights Dream);Paganini-Liszt,	X5504

Sauer, FRISSON DE FEUILLES; GALOP DE CONCERT X5505
Chopin, Etude c# OP. 25, NO. 7; IMPROMTU F# OP. 36 X5506

Odeon (Parlophone) c. 1930	Odeon #	Parlo #
Beethoven-Rubinstein, ALLA TURCA	O-4762	
Sauer, ESPERLAUB	O-4762	
Chopin, ETUDE E OP. 10, NO. 3	O-6793	E10863
Sauer, SPIELUHR	O-6793	E10863
Chopin, FANTASIE IMPROMTU c# OP. 66	O-8369	E10842
Chopin, WALTZ A♭ OP. 42	O-8369	
Liszt, GNOMENREIGEN		E10842

Columbia 1939	
Chopin, ETUDE C OP. 25 NO. 12; WALTZ F OP. 34 NO. 3	LW38
Liszt, RICORDANZA	LWX353
Liszt, CONSOLATION NO. 3 D♭ ; VALSE DUBLIE NO. 1 F#	LX807
Liszt, CONCERTO NO. 1 E (Paris Conservatorie Orch; Weingartner)	LX789/91
Liszt, CONCERTO NO. 2 A (Paris Conservatorie Orch; Weingartner)	LX862/4

Notes on discography

Vox. These may turn up single-sided, but the list of titles is probably complete. Acoustic recording.

Pathe. The Pathe discs may wear quickly if played with a jewel needle. Electrical recording.

Odeon and Parlophone. Owing to the couplings being mixed, and the fact that the titles were not all issued under both labels, each side of each record is listed separately, with the relevant Odeon or Parlophone number given in each case. Electrical recording. Record numbers may vary according to the country of origin, but recordings are the same as those listed here.

No copies of the following seen by me, but the information is well authenticated. Vox 06249, 06250; Pathe X5506; Odeon O-4762

The above listing is probably complete, but I should be delighted to know that there were others.

(Curiosa Phonographianna continued)

parts, but superb in that of Col. Mulberry Sellers. The third imitation (and this being a two-minute cylinder, the sections are necessarily brief) is that of LAWRENCE BARRET, IN SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY VIII. It is a coincidence that he was born in the same year as Raymond; his real name was Larry Brannigan. He served as a captain in the Civil War, and then returned to his profession, becoming known as one of the finest tragedians of the American stage, besides being a scholarly man, well-known in literary circles. If the last two imitations are as well-done as the first, we really have some indication of the speech and style of two famous thespians The imitator? The announcement sayeth not, but it seems a safe guess to attribute it to our old friend who could and would do about anything needed in the recording line --- Leonard Garfield Spencer.

* Moreschi was a castrato who lingered on into the twentieth century. As late as 1909 he sang in the choir of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Though it is extremely doubtful, there may have been others. (Editor)

(Fonotipia Series continued)

DUETS

F 1001 Aida (Verdi) Atto. III Duet Aida-Amonasro Pt. I (Rivedrai le foreste imbalsamate)

" " " " " " " Pt.II (Su dunque sorgete egizie corti)

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